

Appl. No. 10/692,572

**RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER** Attorney Docket No. 10541-1894

JAN 29 2007

II. Remarks

Favorable reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present Amendment is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-5, 8-16 and 21 were pending in this application. By this paper, Applicants have amended claims 1, 5, 9, 10, 12 and 13 and canceled claims 3, 8 and 21 to more particularly point out and clarify certain aspects of Applicants' invention. Claims 1, 4-5, and 9-16 are now pending in this application. No new matter has been added.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 5 and 8-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants have canceled claim 8 by this response and therefore, the rejection of claim 8 is now moot. Moreover, claim 5 at line 15 has been amended by removing the terminology "together between", as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection of claim 5 and its dependent claims, claims 9-16.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3, 5 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,778,085 issued to Lipkin ("Lipkin"). Applicants have canceled claims 3 and 8 by this response and therefore, the rejections of claims 3 and 8 are now moot. Moreover, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite that the seal extends "around" the ends of both the airbag chute and door panel. In doing this the seal extends from the front



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surface of the door panel to the rear side of the airbag chute, so as to encapsulate the ends and secure the door panel in a closed position. Applicants have similarly amended claim 5 and has further amended this claim to recite that the *airbag device has a means to force open the door panel, wherein a portion of the seal is secured in position by being pinched between the rear side of the airbag chute and the outer surface of the substrate.* Support may be found in the specification for these amendments in paragraphs [0015], [0022] and [0025].

Lipkin does not disclose, teach or suggest the present invention recited in amended claims 1 and 5. In Lipkin, the finish sheet 11 is located over top of the door panel, but it does not extend "around" or about the ends of the chute and door, as claimed. It is believed that the presently used language does not permit an interpretation where a finishing sheet is merely located over top of the ends, but not "around" the ends as recited in claims 1 and 5. Additionally the finishing sheet 11 in Lipkin is secured to an exterior surface of the dashboard, not pinched between the rear side of the air bag chute and substrate (as required in claim 5). Accordingly, Applicants believe claims 1 and 5 are in a condition for allowance.

Claim 21 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,527,063 to Garner ("Garner"). Applicants have canceled claim 21 by this response and therefore, the rejection of claim 21 is now moot.



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Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 10 and 12-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lipkin in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,457,739 issued to Dailey ("Dailey"). These claims depend directly or indirectly in claim 5 and are allowable at least for the same reasons as claim 5.

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lipkin in view of Dailey and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,726,239 to Teranishi. Claim 11 depends on claim 10, which Applicants believe to be in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants believe claim 11 is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 10.

Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lipkin in view of Dailey and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,611,564 issued to Bauer. Claim 16 depends on claim 15, which Applicants believe to be in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants believe claim 16 is also in a condition for allowance:

Claims 4 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lipkin in view of Garner. Claims 4 and 9 respectively depend from independent claims 1 and 5. Since claims 1 and 5 are allowable for the reasons presented above, Applicants believe claims 4 and 9 are likewise allowable.



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Conclusion

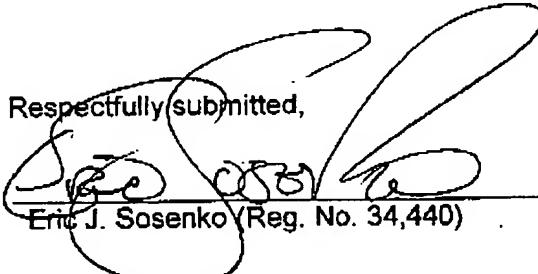
Applicants have made a genuine effort to respond to each of the examiners rejections in advancing the prosecution of this case. Applicants believe that all formal and substantive requirements for patentability have been met and that this case is in a condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

January 29, 2007

Date

Attachments: None
EJS/DPD/jll

Respectfully submitted,


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